



The Companion Chronicles: The Second Doctor Volume 1

1.2 The Story of Extinction

by Ian Atkins

Speaking Characters:

Jamie McCrimmon, a young Scot from 1746 in the early days of seeing the universe -
FRAZER HINES

Victoria Waterfield, a Victorian orphan from 1867, in the care of the Doctor -
DEBORAH WATLING

(Older) Victoria Waterfield, living in 2016 after settling down in 1968 - DEBORAH
WATLING

The Second Doctor, a Time Travelling alien - FRAZER HINES

Selsey, a celebrity finding that fame only has so many uses - LISA BOWERMAN

Extras:

Policewoman - LISA BOWERMAN

Doctor Who – The Story of Extinction – Episode 1

SC. 1. EXT. THE PLANET AMYRYNDAA. DAY.

[This scene extracted from Sc. 7]

(THE “JAMIE-READING-THE-ALPHABET” SECTIONS ARE GENERALLY USED TO INDICATE A SCENE BREAK AND PASSAGE OF TIME. THERE SHOULD BE A FADE-IN AND FADE-OUT, RATHER THAN A STRAIGHT CUT).

JAMIE READS: IN THE BACKGROUND THE AMBIENCE OF THE PLANET AMYRYNDAA; A SOFT WIND, TREES, ENOUGH TO GIVE THESE EXTRACTS THEIR OWN CONTEXT.

JAMIE: (HESITANT, UNSURE)

So then... A is for apple...

SC. 2. INT. VICTORIA'S FLAT, LONDON, PRESENT DAY.

A HOUSE IN LONDON, PRESENT DAY: THE TICKING OF AN ORNAMENTAL CLOCK,
MAYBE SLIGHT TRAFFIC.

VICTORIA: (NARRATING)

The police asked me lots of questions, and made sure I was alright and had friends who could come around if I needed. It was good of them really - you hear such stories about how little they care about burglary.

POLICEWOMAN:

Now, Miss Waterfield: this man you saw in the lobby of your building. Is there anything else about him you can remember?

VICTORIA:

No, officer. As I've said, he was quite short, wearing a linen suit - with a Panama hat he raised in a greeting. Funny really, quite the wrong time of year for that sort of get-up. He was Scottish, I could hear that when he said-

VICTORIA: (SCOTTISH ACCENT – SYLVESTER McCOY'S SEVENTH DOCTOR)

"Good afternoon, Miss Waterfield."

VICTORIA:

Dark hair. And... Well, nothing else really. I'm sorry.

POLICEWOMAN:

We've spoken to the other residents. No other strangers were seen in the building. This could well have been your burglar.

VICTORIA:

Goodness! If I'd come back just a few minutes earlier, I might have caught him [in my flat]...

POLICEWOMAN:

If you're sure nothing's been stolen, then it's possible he saw you returning, decided to cut his losses. Nothing was taken?

VICTORIA:

I telephoned when I realised someone had been inside, but now that I've looked... (A good lie) No, nothing.

VICTORIA (NARRATING):

I've never lied to a constable before. My father would be appalled. But what could I do? The only thing that had gone was a sheet of paper that didn't come from this planet, and I could hardly explain that, could I? Besides, it wasn't so much a burglary as a trade I suppose. I

don't know what this new thing is - a snuffbox or something? - but what they've taken...

SHE STRUGGLES FOR A MOMENT

VICTORIA (NARRATING):

Well they've taken the last thing I had to remind me of Jamie.

MUSIC: (DOCTOR WHO OPENING TITLES)

SC. 3. EXT. AMYRYNDAA SURFACE. DAY.

AMYRYNDAA IS A PLEASANT WORLD - ALMOST SUSPICIOUSLY SO - AND ALL OUTSIDE AMBIENCE SHOULD BE A PERFECT COUNTRYSIDE, INCLUDING BREEZES, BIRDS, ANIMAL LIFE - NOTHING PARTICULARLY ALIEN. THEY'D HAVE FILMED THIS IN THE NEW FOREST!

JAMIE: (SLOWLY READING, TRIUMPH AT THE END)

So "A" is for apple... And for... And... Well, for "And" too, isn't it? I can hear the sound of it. And "B" is for... (pronounced bred-frew-it) Breadfruit!

Sc. 4. EXT. AMYRYNDAA SURFACE.

A DIFFERENT AMBIENCE TO THE SCENE ABOVE, ENOUGH TO INDICATE A CHANGE OF LOCATION.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

It's kinda daft, but I liked the smells of the new worlds best. They weren't always pleasant, but they were always different. They reminded me of my new life, of my new friends, of being somewhere I'd never have dreamed of before I met the Doctor.

SOUND FX: THE OPENING OF THE TARDIS DOOR FROM OUTSIDE, THREE PEOPLE EMERGING, TAKING DEEP LUNGFULS OF BREATH.

VICTORIA:

Oh, Jamie, Doctor, it smells divine!

THE DOCTOR:

Yes, it is rather lovely isn't it?

SOUND FX: THE CRUMP OF DISTANT RETRO ROCKETS FIRING FROM HIGH ABOVE AS SHIPS MAKE CONTROLLED DESCENTS.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The sky seemed to explode. Suddenly this beautiful place was all noise and flame. I tensed - my time with the Doctor told me this was generally the start of an attack or invasion - but as we watched,

spacecraft dropped peacefully from the sky, floating down like thistle seeds on clouds of smoke.

THE DOCTOR: (AIRILY)

Exploration craft I'd guess. Although I've never seen so many in one go.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The smaller ships headed off in all sorts of directions, disappearing behind forests, mountains. But the biggest one stayed the course and landed close by. It's funny the tricks that distance plays, as close up what had been a tiny speck loomed high over us. It'd not been landed more than a moment when ramps opened up and people and big-wheeled vehicles emerged. The vehicles headed off quickly like they were late for something, while the people dragged large boxes on wheels, talking happily to each other with voices that carried over to us.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

A woman was approaching. She wore the same uniform as the others, but also a strange, beautiful sort of mask or head-dress thing which hid most of her face. Across her forehead glowed a set of numbers. The Doctor's always told me it's rude to stare, but it was hard not to.

She had been talking to first one group then another. They talked to her as if shy. Then she'd hand them something and move on, leaving the group behind to nudge each other excitedly. Now it seemed to be our

turn. She gave the Doctor a wee thin book.

SELSEY: (A Z-LIST CELEB BEING AN A-LIST)

Welcome to Amyryndaa. Here's your joining pack. Can I take your names?

THE DOCTOR:

I'm the Doctor, this is Victoria, Jamie. It's a pleasure to meet you,
er... er...?

SELSEY: (SNIPPY, ANGRY)

Oh yes, very funny.

THE DOCTOR: (BAFFLED)

Oh, I didn't mean to be rude. We just don't know who you are.

SELSEY: (VERY DELIBERATELY TRYING TO MOVE ON)

Will you please just tell me which expedition team are you with?

THE DOCTOR: (FLUSTERED, BEWILDERED)

Ah. Well, we're rather our own team I suppose.

SELSEY:

I think Professor Tine is still looking for volunteers. That's over in
the main ship rather than the field sites: sorry, but you should have
been here more quickly.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The Doctor seemed far from disappointed: I groaned as I saw his face light up. The woman moved on to speak to the next group, and I heard someone call her "Selsey" as if they'd known her all their lives. I hoped she wasn't the ruler or something!

The Doctor had opened the pack he'd been given, revealing a slim book. I looked over his shoulder as he opened it, and both of us reacted in surprise as the words there *moved*. I'd never had the knowing o' reading, but I was pretty sure this wasn't how it worked.

VICTORIA: (READING)

"Welcome to Amyryndaa". How funny! It's like something from Alice in Wonderland! How are the words moving, Doctor?

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The book was just a few pages, but as the Doctor turned each one, some of the words moved with him, while pictures grew or shrank. It felt like something living.

THE DOCTOR:

At this point in time it's called "Parchment", I think: a type of virtual paper; computer-driven ink on a responsive backing. It senses when it's being looked at, what it thinks you're going to look at next, and tries to help you.

VICTORIA: (IS HE JOKING WITH THEM?)

That little booklet can do all that, Doctor?

THE DOCTOR:

Oh no, Victoria. It will be linked to some large data-hub somewhere, like a big library, you see, and it gets the information from there as you need it.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

He used the booklet as a fan for a moment, his shock of black hair flapping in the breeze as he cast an excited eye over the activity around us.

THE DOCTOR:

Even when everything becomes electronic, or (disdainful) *held on computer*, people never lose the desire to touch a book as they're reading it, to have pages they can turn in their hands. Funny really.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The Doctor opened the wee book again and turned the pages. You could see the words changing as he did so, as the thing read him as he was reading it. It gave me the willies.

THE DOCTOR:

Oh my. This is fascinating. They're data archaeologists

VICTORIA:

Archaeologists? Like Professor Parry on Telos?

DOCTOR:

Something like that, Victoria, yes. Only they specialise in information, you see, how it's been used by a civilisation, what it says about them. You gather a picture of a people by the language they used, the stories they told, the things they thought worth writing down. Though it's a rare discipline. This planet must have a fascinating history to need so many! (GLEEFULLY) I'm sure they could use some help!

Sc. 5. INT. BASE HQ. DAY.

THE SHIP INTERIOR IS A BIG, CAPE CANAVERAL STYLE CONTROL ROOM - AND VERY MUCH IN A 1960S VEIN, SO CLUNKY BUTTONS WHEN USED, AND COMPUTER TAPE NOISES.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The HQ was in the big spaceship. Nobody paid us any attention as we entered. They were working away at screens, or studying maps on the strange Parchment that changed itself as you watched. The Doctor quietly guided us to seats at the back. Victoria and I exchanged a long-suffering look.

As we listened, people appeared on the screens, reporting in as they established their base camps, each one with a peculiar name like "Turovsky" or "Gorin". The Doctor was playing with the book, looking up the words, and I saw a flicker of uncertainty on his face. He frowned as if unhappy about something. Victoria had noticed it too.

VICTORIA:

Is there something wrong, Doctor? Don't say there is: it seems so beautiful here.

THE DOCTOR:

That's just it, you see, Victoria. It is lovely. It's perfect, in fact. Throughout the universe, you need certain conditions to be right in order for life to develop. Well, life as you know it. (PONDERING)

And this world is spot on in every sense...

JAMIE:

Oh aye. It's great, Doctor. Better than those desert worlds we've seen: full of trees, birds, full of life.

VICTORIA:

It's lovely.

(BEAT)

Isn't it?

THE DOCTOR: (DARKLY MUSING)

If the archeologists are here, it's to look at ruins. But this should be a perfect environment for life. I wonder what happened...

(Brightening up) I'm sure I'll get to the bottom of it!

JAMIE:

Oh now Doctor. Here you go again, getting involved...

SC. 6. INT. PRESENT DAY. VICTORIA'S SITTING ROOM.

VICTORIA: (NARRATING)

And so, of course, the Doctor got involved. Nobody asked us where we'd come from - they all assumed we'd arrived in one of the other spaceships - and they just welcomed the Doctor's experience. It was positively unique in all the times we found ourselves meeting people on alien planets...

(Realising what she's said) Alien planets... Goodness. I still say these things as if they were normal...

People realised the Doctor's knowledge would be a huge help. Jamie and I were almost forgotten about, until that Selsey woman put us on supplies duties. And that wasn't too bad, not bad at all: walking on that beautiful planet, looking for fruits and vegetables that grew in abundance.

SC. 7. EXT. FOREST. DAY.

JAMIE AND VICTORIA ARE WALKING IDLY ALONG A FOREST PATH. IT'S PEACEFUL, THE ONLY SOUND A LAZY WIND STIRRING HUGE TREES, AND BIRD SONG, PERHAPS THE ODD BRANCH AS THEY MOVE IT ASIDE TO GO ON.

JAMIE:

I can't believe we're still here. How much longer is the Doctor going to be helping them?

VICTORIA:

My father used to be the same when he'd encounter a problem he couldn't solve. We'd find cold dinners outside his door. I'd smell his pipe smoke in the middle of the night... He's a scientist, Jamie. Sometimes it's how they work.

JAMIE:

Aye, leaving us to walk through the woods picking apples and... and... (awkward struggle, then:) the other things on that there list she gave you.

VICTORIA: [BRANDISHING A SHEET OF THE PARCHMENT]

"Apples... Breadfruit... Cherries... Damsons..."

LONG PAUSE BETWEEN THEM.

JAMIE: [TENSE, WARY OF BEING RIDICULED]

Could you teach me that?

VICTORIA:

Teach you what?

JAMIE:

The reading?

VICTORIA: [NEVER HAVING REALISED IT]

Do you mean you can't [read] -

SHE CATCHES HERSELF BEFORE SAYING THE LAST WORD. AWKWARD. BEAT. BUT
VICTORIA'S HEART IS REACHED.

VICTORIA:

Yes, Jamie. (TOUCHED) Of course. I'd be proud to. Look, let's sit down
here.

SOUND FX: THEY QUICKLY SIT.

VICTORIA:

I've got a blank sheet of that Parchment, I'll just unfold it and- Oh!

SOUND FX: A sheet of dry, thick paper quickly unfolded.

VICTORIA:

Oh, it did it for itself! (Wry, rallying) So, if it will let me, I'll just... draw with my finger... There. So, this first letter, it's an "A". It makes an "ah" sound.

JAMIE:

Like in "Apple"? Like on the list there?

VICTORIA:

That's right!

JAMIE: (HESITANT, UNSURE)

So then... (Long pause - here goes) A is for apple...

Sc. 8. EXT. AMYRYNDAA COUNTRYSIDE.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

I didn't get on with that Parchment stuff. One day, I'd got a sheet of it, and I'd planned to make a paper boat like Ben had shown me, for Victoria, maybe with letters written on it. "A" to "E", certainly. I knew those. We'd found a bonnie wee pond when we were getting supplies, and it would have been perfect for it. But first of all the sheet fluttered with words, then when I started trying to fold it, it kept on making itself go flat again. One time I thought I'd got it... And my little boat unfolded until I was back where I started. It wasn't even creased!

I found Selsey watching me, and although there was little of her face to make out under that mask she wore, her eyes were laughing, though not unkindly. She'd seemed different in the last few days. It wasn't just the numbers at the top of the mask changing, though they had. But for someone I'd thought was royalty on first meeting, now the people here treated her with less and less respect. I'd seen her running around, asking them for something to do. And they laughed at her for it. She nodded at the sheet of Parchment.

SELSEY: (FISHING WITH THIS)

The Parchment has micro-motor cells that can repair any damage, from a tear to a fold...

JAMIE:

That sounds like a lot of effort to put into a piece of paper!

SELSEY: (CURIOUS)

How could you not know this?

JAMIE: (AWARE HE'S IN TROUBLE)

Ah well, you know... (CHANGE OF SUBJECT) Was there something you wanted, Selsey?

SELSEY: (LETTING IT GO, AS WHAT SHE NEEDS IS URGENT)

...It's your friend the Doctor. Can you come? He's got ever so worked up.

JAMIE: (HEADING AWAY)

Victoria's still gathering supplies. I'll just get her and we'll be right there.

SELSEY: (AS IF SHE'S NOT MADE HER POINT)

He's been shouting at all the scientists!

JAMIE: (UNDER HIS BREATH)

Aye. He does that...

SC 9. INT. CONTROL ROOM.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

When we got there, the Doctor was at the front of a group of people, talking to them like a preacher on a Sunday. They were following his words on more sheets of that Parchment stuff. As I went past, it showed rough drawings of huge monsters. (Darkly) Aye, monsters. I knew we'd get down to that eventually.

The Doctor saw Victoria and me. He was already worked up, but somehow we made him worse.

THE DOCTOR:

[All I'm saying] is that we need to be more cautious. Much more cautious. If you look at the notes I've given you, Korvin Base has unearthed evidence of hunter-gatherer settlements, all of which died out shortly after cave paintings of savage, four-armed creatures started appearing in their records. None of you can deny this now, can you?

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

One of the scientists - a sniffy, impatient man - pointed out to the Doctor that the other research sites were reporting similar: that terrible monsters had been reported, monsters which thankfully seemed to have died out.

THE DOCTOR:

But that's just it, don't you see? You've all assumed the monsters are gone because you've found no evidence. But at one point these creatures were real enough that villages starved to death rather than risk confronting what was in the woods.

THE DOCTOR: (ADDRESSING A DIFFERENT PART OF THE ROOM)

You, Junderbrett, you found remains of an Iron Age-level town which had torn itself apart in panic when monsters were sighted beyond the walls.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The man the Doctor spoke to agreed, saying they were bound to find remains soon and identify what these creatures had been before they went extinct.

THE DOCTOR: (VERY WORRIED)

If they are extinct. If you go looking for something and don't see it, it doesn't mean it's not there.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The Doctor was biting at his nails. One of the scientists asked how hi-tech satellite scans and automated probes could have revealed nothing. At that, the Doctor stopped his fretful pacing and looked glum.

THE DOCTOR: (not liking it)

If they're intelligent enough to know you're looking for them, maybe they're intelligent enough to hide...

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

A hush fell on the room. A few of the scientists laughed at how spooked the Doctor had got them.

(beat)

And then Selsey came in, to say that Gerrick Base had missed reporting-in for the night.

SC. 10. INT. COMMUNICATIONS ROOM.

SOUND FX: ON TOP OF THE COMPUTER-ROOM/TECH BACKGROUND NOISE, THERE'S A REGULAR ALARM SOUND (USED LATER TOO), A SORT OF "REMINDER" ALARM - BUT A 1960s-y VERSION.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The communications room was full of screens, and littered with discarded sheets of the Parchment they used for their records. One of the scientists was sitting at a desk, an alarm sounding, urgently asking over and over for Gerrick Base to report in. And over and over there was no answer from the blank screen above her.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The Doctor tried a few times too, then muted the alarm, checked some readings and played with some switches. I've seen that before. Sometimes the Doctor thinks with his fingers, giving them something to do while his brain goes to work.

SOUND FX: ALARM TONE SHUTS OFF

VICTORIA:

Doctor? What is it? Are they [dead?]...

THE DOCTOR: (UNCOMFORTABLE)

I don't know Victoria. And I'm very afraid there's only one way to find out...

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The Doctor looked at Victoria and I, and I could see he couldn't make up his mind. This was generally when I had to help out.

JAMIE:

Are you going to go out there?

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The Doctor frowned at the screen, as if willing it to come to life. He was muttering under his breath, ticking off options on his fingers.

JAMIE:

Then we'll come with you.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

He didn't hear me for a moment, coming to the end of whatever thought was going on. Then he blinked, like someone waking up.

THE DOCTOR:

What?! Oh no, Jamie. You and Victoria stay here where you'll be safe.

VICTORIA:

But safe from what, Doctor?

JAMIE: (DEFINITE)

If you don't know, then we're just as safe there as we are here. So we're going with you.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

Victoria didn't look so sure, but like me she wanted the three of us to stay together. So she agreed quietly, and before long the Doctor had bundled us into one of the base vehicles and we were on our way.

SC. 11. INT. VEHICLE ON THE AMYRYNDAA SURFACE. DAY.

Jamie: (NARRATING)

There were all sorts of signs of life during the journey to Gerrick Base. Selsey was driving, and she pointed out flocks of blue birds, catching the sunlight as they wheeled through the air. At another point there were animals not quite like rabbits, scurrying chaotically away from the vehicle as we passed. But all that life just contrasted more and more with not hearing from Gerrick Base. The Doctor kept trying on the radio, with as much luck as the first time. After a while, Selsey stopped pointing things out and we just drove in silence.

SC. 12. EXT. GERRICK BASE. DAY.

SOUND FX: A VEHICLE PULLS UP.

THE DOCTOR: (CLAMBERING OUT FROM THE CAB)

Yes, well, let's see. Jamie, you too, come along. Victoria, you wait for us with Selsey.

SOUND FX: JAMIE EMERGING TOO.

VICTORIA: (FROM INSIDE, WORRIED)

Be careful both of you.

SOUND FX: JAMIE AND THE DOCTOR'S FOOTSTEPS THROUGH:

THE DOCTOR: (WALKING)

Stay close to me Jamie. We don't know what we're going to find. Although I try not to think the worst, in this case...

JAMIE: (MUSING TO THE DOCTOR AS THEY WALK)

I can't believe it, though. I saw Gerrick Base report in yesterday. They were about to bake potatoes, sing songs and tell stories around the camp-fire. And now we're saying-

SOUND FX: THE WALKING STOPS, AS THEY FIND WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR.

THE DOCTOR: (SAD)

Oh dear.

(BEAT)

JAMIE: (REVOLTED, SHOCKED)

But what happened? Most of them are even still sitting around the fire!

JAMIE AND THE DOCTOR MOVE AROUND AUDIO PICTURE LEFT/RIGHT THROUGH THE REST OF THE SCENE AS THEY CHECK OUT THE LOCATION.

THE DOCTOR: (STUDYING THE CORPSES)

I can't see any wounds, no indication of a physical attack. Signs of asphyxia in a few of them... But still sitting cross-legged. Whatever happened, it happened quickly. And it's like nothing ever described on this world.

JAMIE:

All that talk of monsters here, Doctor... But how could any of them do this?

THE DOCTOR: (A SIGH, BEFORE)

That, I'm afraid Jamie, is the vital question...

SC. 13. EXT. AMYRYNDAA SURFACE. DAY.

JAMIE:

"Guh" is for... Oh, no, you said. "Jee". Jee is for jee-rapefruit.

VICTORIA:

It's grapefruit.

JAMIE:

But it sounds like "Guh" when you say it then, doesn't it? And you
[said] -

VICTORIA: (PATIENT)

Sometimes in English it sounds one way, and is spelled another.

JAMIE:

No wonder us Scots have always mistrusted the English. Even their
language is twisty-turny! (AWKWARD REALISATION) Oh. Present company
excepted...

Sc. 14. EXT. AMYRYNDAA SURFACE. DAY.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The Doctor had been unusually quiet when we drove back from Gerrick Base. Once or twice I caught him looking at the two of us, at Victoria and I.

When he asked Selsey to stop the vehicle, we got out to find he'd stopped us right beside the TARDIS.

JAMIE: (SURPRISED, DOUBTFUL)

We're no' leaving them, are we, Doctor?

VICTORIA:

Do you know what it was? Back at Gerrick Base?

SOUND FX: THE TARDIS DOORS BEING UNLOCKED UNDER THE FOLLOWING:

THE DOCTOR: (PONDERING TO HIMSELF)

Not a clue. But there's something here on the planet, and perhaps I've exposed us all... if it's a pathogen... But if it isn't...

SOUND FX: TARDIS OUTER DOOR OPENING.

THE DOCTOR:

Right, both of you. Come along.

SC. 15. INT. TARDIS INT.

VICTORIA: (WALKING INSIDE)

I don't understand, Doctor. Where are we going?

JAMIE: (WALKING IN TOO, BUT HE'S WORKED IT OUT)

We're not going anywhere, are we? You're going back out there but you don't want us with you.

THE DOCTOR: (PLACATING)

It shouldn't be for long, Jamie, Victoria. But you'll be much safer in here than out there. (Unsure) At least, until I know what's out there.

VICTORIA:

But Doctor, how will [you be safe?]

THE DOCTOR:

Please. Just for now. I've shown you how to use the food machine, haven't I, in case you get hungry?

JAMIE:

Hungry? How long are you going to be gone? What if something does happen to you?

THE DOCTOR:

Oh, I'm sure it won't come to that. (Beat) But... ah... If it does. Just stay in the TARDIS. You'll always be safe in the TARDIS. There

are some people I know who'll find it if it stays here for a while, and they'll get you home. (False cheer) So, you see, there's absolutely nothing to worry about is there?

LONG PAUSE.

THE DOCTOR: (QUICKLY, EVASIVE)

Jolly good. You'll barely notice I've gone.

AS HE LEAVES THE TARDIS:

THE DOCTOR:

Just don't go outside!

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

And he left us, the Doctor left us. Victoria and I watched him get back into the vehicle and drive away. I wanted to dash straight out there and follow, but I could tell the Doctor's reassurances had, as usual, had the opposite effect on Victoria.

So I took out that sheet of the Parchment stuff, moved my finger down the list, and carried on:

JAMIE: (SLIGHTLY RESIGNED)

Come on then. We might as well do something with the time, after all. Here we go: "N" is [for nectar- Nectarine!]

SC. 16. INT. TARDIS.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

Time was funny in the TARDIS. Like when you're looking forward to something and you wait and wait and everything seems so slow. And then at other times you'd swear everything was happening at once.

Victoria and I went on with the reading for a time, neither of us looking at the scanner. We tried the food machine, but in the end admitted that neither of us were hungry.

SC. 17. VICTORIA'S HOME. DAY.

VICTORIA:

Time was funny in the TARDIS. I think it always is when you're scared. Even now I can still remember the shock of the Doctor leaving us, thinking we were safe. But that was how he was. He always did things with the best of intentions, even when he didn't understand us at all. What he'd done had made sense to him.

Jamie and I practiced his reading, but we were both worried. What if it was just the two of us left there, like something out of a fairy tale, locked in a castle by a well-meaning wizard?

(Fond memory) I think Jamie and I talked more then, just the two of us, than at any other time. Yet now that I try and think about it, I can't remember anything we said. Nothing important, I suppose, but... Sometimes it's not what you say, but how you say it...

VICTORIA: (FIRM, SERIOUS - AS EVASIVE NOW AS SHE HAD TO BE THEN)

I came to a decision right then that we had to find the Doctor, even if it meant leaving the TARDIS. (Lying to herself) Because that was the most important thing then, wasn't it?

SC. 18. AMYRYNDAA SURFACE. MORNING.

SOUND FX: TARDIS door opening, the two of them emerging.

JAMIE: (LEAVING THE TARDIS)

He'll no' be happy about this.

VICTORIA:

I didn't hear you hesitate when I suggested it, Jamie McCrimmon.

JAMIE: (CLOSING TARDIS DOOR)

I'm not saying it's not a good idea, mind.

A PAUSE AS THEY LOOK AROUND.

VICTORIA:

It's so quiet... Where is everyone?

JAMIE: (DOUBTFUL, WORRIED)

Maybe they're all in the base there?

VICTORIA: (BRAVE)

Yes, that must be it. Come along.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

We walked the short distance to the base. It had seemed so solid when everything was fine, but now it seemed flimsy, flapping with shadows

in the light breeze. Victoria and I hesitated to go any further. The doorway was dark, and that was wrong, right there. It was down to me. I was going to lead the way.

(beat)

(Wry) Sometimes I hate having to be the strong one.

SOUND FX: A VEHICLE APPROACHING, UNDER:

VICTORIA:

Jamie! Look!

JAMIE:

Who's that driving?

VICTORIA: (PEERING)

It's... I think it's Selsey, isn't it?

JAMIE:

I wonder where she's been? And why she's driving so fast?

SOUND FX: VEHICLE FINALLY DRAWS TO A HALT.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

It was Selsey. She hurried out of the vehicle, looking at us with first relief and then confusion.

SELSEY:

What are you two doing here? The Doctor said he'd left you safe...

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

I didn't really have an answer for her. The darkness of the base was worrying me. Selsey followed my gaze, and seemed to pick up on it too.

SELSEY:

Your Doctor friend wanted to go over to Gorin base. So I took him. But then I tried to find out where they wanted me next, and no one here would answer my calls...

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

It was only then, as her words sunk in, that we all heard it:

SOUND FX: QUIET AT FIRST, BUT LOUDER AS WE GET CLOSER TO IT – A NUMBER OF COMPUTER ALARMS, SORT OF "YOU HAVE MAIL"/"REMINDER" STYLE THINGS, BUT TOO MANY.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

There was a noise coming from inside the base. I recognised the sound – it was the one we'd heard when Gerrick base didn't report in. Selsey tutted and we followed her as she went to turn it off. We had bigger problems.

SC. 19. INT. COMMUNICATIONS ROOM.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

We nearly bumped into Selsey when we got to the communications room. She stood frozen in the doorway, her mouth open in dismay. On the communications board, light after light was coming on, flashing away, alarms sounding in distress as camp after camp missed reporting in. There was no one here. The room was a mess, scattered with papers like a storm had blown through it.

SELSEY: (LOST, SCARED)

I don't understand it.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

She pressed some control, and the alarms went quiet. She looked at Victoria and I in confusion:

SELSEY: (TRYING TO CONVINCING HERSELF)

There's nothing dangerous on this world. There can't be. We've checked over and over. We wouldn't have come here!

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

And it was Victoria who realised the worst thing first.

VICTORIA:

Jamie! There! Gorin base. They haven't reported in either.

JAMIE:

So...? (Suddenly remembering) But the Doctor was there!

VICTORIA: (SEEING ANOTHER SHOCK ELSEWHERE)

The sheets of Parchment! There! (Beat) And there!

JAMIE:

It's all flooding with words... That one too. And that one...

VICTORIA:

It's all going so fast... I can't read it- (Shock) Oh! It moved!

SOUND FX: A SHARP, SUDDEN, CRUMPLE SOUND AS A SHEET OF STIFF PAPER
SUDDENLY FOLDS ITSELF INTO A SCUTTling SHAPE.

VICTORIA:

How did it do that? It... folded itself into a creature...

SELSEY:

Each sheet has motor cells, but [I've never seen it do this]

SOUND FX: ANOTHER FOLDING SOUND. ANOTHER. CONTINUAL THROUGH THE REST
OF THIS SCENE AS SHEET AFTER SHEET TURNS INTO AN ORIGAMI CREATURE.

VICTORIA:

Jamie! Get back! That one's getting ready to jump!

JAMIE: (INCREDULOUS)

Jump? What are you talking about-

JAMIE GIVES A GRUNT AS HE DUCKS AWAY AND BACK FROM ONE OF THE THINGS JUMPING AT HIS FACE.

JAMIE:

It was going for my face!

SOUND FX: VICTORIA - REACTION NOISE AS SHE AVOIDS ANOTHER.

JAMIE:

Quick! They're trying to cut us off. Get out while we can!

VICTORIA:

But the Doctor-

JAMIE:

Victoria, it's just us for now. (A swallow, reluctantly stepping into the Doctor's shoes) When I say run: run.

SOUND FX: CLATTERING OF PAPER CREATURES, MORE SHEETS OF PARCHMENT FOLDING UP, THE FRESH ALARM CHIMES OF MISSED REPORTING-IN. SECONDS OF PANIC, JAMIE PICKING HIS MOMENT.

JAMIE: [DESPERATE]

Run!

MUSIC: (DOCTOR WHO CLOSING TITLES)

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MUSIC: (DOCTOR WHO OPENING TITLES)

SC. 20. INT. COMMUNICATIONS ROOM.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

And it was Victoria who realised the worst thing first.

VICTORIA:

Jamie! There! Gorin base. They haven't reported in either.

JAMIE:

So...? (Suddenly remembering) But the Doctor was there!

VICTORIA: (SEEING ANOTHER SHOCK ELSEWHERE)

The sheets of Parchment! Look! There! (Beat) And there!

JAMIE:

It's all flooding with words... That one too. And that one...

VICTORIA:

It's all going so fast... I can't read it- (Shock) Oh! It moved!

SOUND FX: A SHARP, SUDDEN, CRUMPLE SOUND AS A SHEET OF STIFF PAPER
SUDDENLY FOLDS ITSELF INTO A SCUTTling SHAPE.

VICTORIA:

How did it do that? It... folded itself into a creature...

SELSEY:

Each sheet has motor cells, but [I've never seen it do this]

SOUND FX: ANOTHER FOLDING SOUND. ANOTHER. CONTINUAL THROUGH THE REST OF THIS SCENE AS SHEET AFTER SHEET TURNS INTO AN ORIGAMI CREATURE.

VICTORIA:

Jamie! Get back! That one's getting ready to jump!

JAMIE: (INCRECULOUS)

Jump? What are you talking about-

JAMIE GIVES A GRUNT AS HE DUCKS AWAY AND BACK FROM ONE OF THE THINGS JUMPING AT HIS FACE.

JAMIE:

It was going for my face!

SOUND FX: VICTORIA - REACTION NOISE AS SHE AVOIDS ANOTHER.

JAMIE:

Quick! The things are trying to cut us off. Get out while we can!

VICTORIA:

But the Doctor-

JAMIE:

Victoria, it's just us for now. (Swallow, reluctantly stepping into the Doctor's shoes) When I say run, run.

SOUND FX: CLATTERING OF PAPER CREATURES, MORE SHEETS OF PARCHMENT FOLDING UP, THE FRESH ALARM CHIMES OF MISSED REPORTING-IN. SECONDS OF PANIC, JAMIE PICKING HIS MOMENT.

JAMIE: [DESPERATE]

Run!

SC. 21. INT. VICTORIA'S HOUSE. PRESENT DAY.

VICTORIA:

While there's always fear in those moments, it's a fear magnified by loneliness. I don't think Jamie ever even felt it, nor the Doctor ever understood it. But when your life is threatened, when the monsters come, you do what you always do - you think of home, of a place you can reach that is safe. A familiar door you can bolt behind you. For me that would have been my father's house. There was a door there so high I would have needed a chair if I wanted to throw the top bolt!

And that was all gone. Fear then wears clothes of loneliness and homesickness, for people and a home you can't get back to.

SC. 22. INT. THE COMMUNICATIONS ROOM. DAY.

SOUND FX: SOME OF THE ALARMS STILL CHIMING OUT, AS THE PAPER CREATURES SCUTTLE AND JAMIE, VICTORIA AND SELSEY MOVE FOR THE EXIT.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

I swatted the first of the wee paper creatures away, but it seemed every sheet of the Parchment was folding itself up into more of them – flapping things, their surfaces running with the moving words, like the shine of a crow's feathers.

I shouted at Selsey and Victoria to head for the door and went after them. Selsey wanted us to try and find the other people in the base, but Victoria and I both knew where the best hope would be. The Doctor. We needed to find him first. He'd sort it out. He always did.

So we took one of the base vehicles, climbing up into the cabin, Selsey getting behind the controls and starting it up. The creatures fluttered against the glass, spilling out from the base like disturbed ants.

Selsey whirled the vehicle suddenly backward, crushing the wee things beneath the huge wheels. Victoria and I went flying! But as we picked ourselves up, and Selsey started to drive us forward and away, I could see the flattened sheets already folding themselves up out of tyre tracks, back into the creatures. They disappeared into the distance as Selsey increased our speed. But I had a sense they hadn't given up.

SC. 23. INT. TARDIS.

(NOTE CHANGE OF BACKGROUND NOISE)

JAMIE:

(Attempting to pronounce "Peach") "P" is for "pea-kuh-huh"? What's that supposed to be? Peach? It's not a "kuh" sound? (Unconvinced) Oh aye. "Ch". I think I'm getting there, you know...

SC. 24. EXT. AMYRYNDAA SURFACE. DAY.

SOUND FX: A VEHICLE DRAWING TO A HALT. A DOOR OPENS. JAMIE CLAMBERS DOWN.

JAMIE: (CALLING UP AND INSIDE)

I can't see anyone. Keep trying the radio Selsey, and wait here in case we have to leave quickly.

VICTORIA: (CLAMBERING DOWN, AS IF GETTING OUT OF A LORRY CAB)

Wait for me, Jamie.

JAMIE:

Would you no' rather stay with Selsey?

VICTORIA: (DETERMINED)

We'll find the Doctor together.

JAMIE:

Aye, all right then. But stay close. We'll try over there.

SOUND FX: WALKING, OVER THE AMYRYNDAA AMBIENT BACKGROUND.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

There wasn't a sound. Not from people, anyway. (Sourly) As ever, the planet sounded full of life, but not the right kind. And we'd not gone far before:

VICTORIA:

There! Oh! Jamie! It's like before! They're all dead!

SOUND FX: THEIR FOOTSTEPS HURRY TO CLOSE THE SHORT DISTANCE TO WHAT THEY'VE FOUND.

JAMIE: (BEING CALM, FOR HER)

Aye, well, hold on. This isn't everyone... Step back, I'm going to turn this one over.

SOUND FX: BODY ON GROUND TURNED OVER.

VICTORIA:

His face! What's that [on it]- It's a sheet of the Parchment!

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The man's face was almost completely masked, by one of the sheets stretched tight across his eyes. I could see the words streaming across it, lines and pictures flickering. And - there! - I saw the man move an arm, just slightly. So maybe there was hope:

SOUND FX: JAMIE PULLS THE SHEET OFF THE MAN'S FACE - IT'S TIGHT, AND RESISTS, SCRUMPLING OVER, THE SOUND OF SHARPLY DRY PAPER.

JAMIE:

Ow! It won't come off- (Renewed effort) Come on, you beastie...

SOUND FX: PAPER TEARS. A GASP OF AWAKENING, INHALATION, FROM THE MAN. THE SOUND OF THE PARCHMENT SHEET FOLDING UP INTO A CREATURE AND SCUTTling AWAY.

JAMIE: (NARRATING) The man looked like he was waking up, blinking at us in confusion. I was too busy trying to see what had happened to the sheet, which had repaired itself and scuttled away.

VICTORIA: (A LITTLE DISTANT)

Jamie! Jamie! Come here - I've found the Doctor!

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

I hurried over to Victoria. And she was right. Although his face was all but hidden under another stretched, living sheet of Parchment, I'd know those baggy clothes anywhere. Slowly, this time, I tugged the paper away.

THE DOCTOR: (AS IF TALKING IN HIS SLEEP)

[the freedom of] Wild Endeavour? (Bashful) Why, it's such an honour, I couldn't possibly- (Then awake, taking on his surroundings) Jamie? Victoria? How did you get here so quickly? I would have hoped you'd stay in the TARDIS for more than a few minutes you know!

JAMIE:

Doctor, it's been a day, at least.

THE DOCTOR:

Rubbish, Jamie... (Taking in his surroundings) My word, what's been going on here?

AN EFFORT AS HE STANDS UP.

THE DOCTOR:

Wait a minute, wait a minute... Yes, it's all coming back to me now...
The Parchment...

JAMIE:

Aye, they seemed to come to life back at the base, turning into some wee beasties that went for your face.

THE DOCTOR: (SLOWLY, PONDERING)

For the eyes, Jamie. So that you had to read what they had to say... I was suddenly so very fascinated...

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The Doctor looked worried. He smiled when Victoria asked how he felt, and brushed the question off, but I've known the Doctor too long to be fooled like that. He didn't know what had happened. As far as he was concerned, he'd only just left Victoria and I back at the TARDIS.

We watched as the man we'd helped started helping his colleagues. The tight Parchment on each face crackled angrily, but then re-shaped itself and scuttled away. I didn't like the thought of them out there, and suggested to the Doctor we tracked them down. He huffed his cheeks out, with another expression I recognised. At times, the man was a pedlar of bad news.

THE DOCTOR:

That's more prevention than cure: I think the threat here is a lot more than the Parchment, Jamie. Remember, whole civilisations died out before the archaeologists arrived. The Parchment itself isn't the threat. But it may be being used by one.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

I gave Victoria a smile, and we busied ourselves helping some of the people that had seemed almost dead. They remembered nothing, all of them weak, and they seemed disappointed, as if they'd lost something wonderful. Behind us, the Doctor spoke to Kelznik, the woman in charge. She was already trying to get in touch with the other bases, but was most concerned about the system that operated the Parchment. She was going to get someone called Dai Agnostics to look into it.

Funny how we could be galaxies and galaxies from Britain, and still run into a Welshman.

JAMIE:

Right, I know you won't want to leave now. So what's next?

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The Doctor's keen blue eyes had locked onto the old ruins of a town. There wasn't much of it left, spilling out of the caves in the hillside, but his curiosity was obvious. He stretched an arm to point at the caves, and smiled.

THE DOCTOR: (DEFINITE, A DECISION MADE)

There, I think. Gorin Base was set up at the biggest ruins on the planet. I don't think it's a coincidence it was one of the first to be attacked. So let's see what it's hiding, shall we?

SC. 25. EXT. AMYRYNDAA COUNTRYSIDE. DAY.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

Selsey came with us, keeping in touch with the people outside of the caves with a radio. Everyone was a bit jumpy now, except the Doctor of course. He seemed to have shrugged off being so close to death.

(slightly disapproving) I've said it before, but times like that just seem to encourage him. It's like telling a bairn not to do something!

Outside the caves, the old town was just rubble, picked over by the wind and rain, shrouded with vegetation. We made our way over it, carefully, watching out for-

SOUND FX: A sudden thrash of something in the undergrowth, moving - like a rabbit in bracken.

VICTORIA:

Look out!

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

But it was just a wee creature like a cat. We'd all thought it was the Parchment creatures again. For the moment they were laying low - and that was almost worse than being attacked by them. We pushed on, and the Doctor led us into the caves.

SC. 26. INT. A LARGE CAVE SPACE.

SOUND FX: ANY IN-STORY MOMENTS SHOULD HAVE THE REVERB OF A CAVE. AMBIENCE SHOULD BE DRIPPING WATER ONTO STALAGMITES, SOFTLY, BACKGROUND.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

It was different inside. A bit magical. Stalagmites (note: intentionally wrong) had started to grow, gleaming like ice in the light from outside. The Doctor brought out a torch, shining it around. We moved deeper inside. It got colder. And the whole time I kept my eye out for those Parchment things.

VICTORIA: (CURIOUS)

Doctor, look at the wall. They're pictograms, aren't they? (Awed)
There's so many...

SOUND FX: DOCTOR STEPPING UP.

THE DOCTOR: (AWED)

My word. Let's have a proper look, shall we?

SOUND FX: A HUFF AND PUFF AS DIRT AND DUST IS BLOWN AWAY, THEN A SLEEVE IS USED TO BRUSH MORE ASIDE.

THE DOCTOR:

You're absolutely right, Victoria. They are pictograms.

JAMIE:

Like words, d'you mean?

THE DOCTOR:

Yes Jamie. It's an early form of writing. But they've got quite a vocabulary here. Hmmm. (Reading for a moment under his breath, grunts of confirmation, before:) I think it's some sort of history... Now, just let me find a pad...

SOUND FX: BRINGING OUT A PAD OF PAPER FROM A BAGGY COAT. THE PAD IS OPEN, PAGES TURNED... SOUNDING A LITTLE LIKE THE PARCHMENT CREATURES.

THE DOCTOR:

Yes, this shouldn't take too long to work out...

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

I exchanged a look with Victoria. She smiled back. But when I looked to Selsey, I could tell there was something wrong.

SOUND FX: THE DOCTOR MUMBLING, TURNING ANOTHER PAGE - AGAIN, SLIGHTLY LIKE THE PARCHMENT CREATURES FOLDING.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

She was playing with her communicator, pressing at it over and over. When I asked her if something was wrong, she looked back and told me she couldn't get any response from outside. The Doctor was distracted,

but he reckoned we were probably too far into the caves, but that didn't seem to calm Selsey. Nor me. So we decided I'd go back with her to the camp to report in, and Victoria would keep the Doctor out of mischief. I'm not sure he even heard the decision, peering as he was at the pictograms, and furiously making notes. I shrugged at Victoria, and Selsey and I headed away.

SC. 27. INT. VICTORIA'S HOME.

VICTORIA:

My father trusted the Doctor, trusted him with me. In retrospect, I don't think the Doctor really understood what was being asked of him, not in human terms. He's never really been father material, though in his way he tried.

But when we were in the caves on Amyryndaa, it was, for a short while, like being with my father again. I sat, making encouraging noises to a man unaware that I didn't understand the theories he muttered and mumbled to himself. He'd make the occasional noise of triumph and his face would light up as he jotted something down. And somehow he always made me feel as though I'd had something to do with it. Although he never said as much, I know my father didn't miss my mother quite so much in those moments. And... that day in the cave... I wondered if perhaps it was the same for the Doctor?

VICTORIA:

But there wasn't the time to ask. I helped as I could, spotting re-occurrences of symbols as the Doctor identified them, and letting him work out how they tied together. For a brief while, I was enjoying it. I felt useful, and-

VICTORIA:

But then the Doctor stopped. He went back through pages in his notebook, checking something, then again. His face darkened. And there was that expression I hated: a mouth working, unspeaking, as he tried to contemplate something terrible. Even now, I can still remember the shiver it gave me.

VICTORIA:

I asked him what was wrong. He didn't speak for a moment, looking at the pictograms as if to confirm a darkest thought. He said slowly that it was a history of the settlement. But one that had realised something was wrong on the planet. Like the scientists, they'd found other, earlier settlements, all of which had self-destructed through fear when the monsters came. And the pictograms spoke of the monsters too, how nothing, no detail, no description, could be agreed, no trace could be found. And, after much consideration, the pictograms had made a realisation. Seven words, which told why Amyryndaa was such a dangerous place, and yet why no threat had ever been found.

VICTORIA:

The Doctor's face was glum as he read those words: (beat) "It lives in the stories we tell".

SC. 28. EXT. AMYRYNDAA SURFACE.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

I'd hoped we'd get outside the caves and see Selsey's people there, that we'd been worrying about nothing but a fault in the radio. But there was no one in sight, and I knew it had gone wrong again. Selsey and I crept onward, starting at every noise in the bushes, at every change in the wind. We hid behind some rubble, and I tried to look like I knew what I was doing. But something else had been bothering Selsey:

SELSEY: (UNSURE)

You're aliens aren't you? The three of you?

JAMIE: (EVASIVE)

We're all aliens here, aren't we?

SELSEY:

You know what I mean.

JAMIE: (AFTER A PAUSE – SHOULD HE ADMIT?)

We're from Earth.

SELSEY:

There's a word I've not heard in a long time. (Mystery solved) And it explains why you didn't know who I am...

JAMIE:

So, if you don't mind me asking: who are you then?

SELSEY: (OBVIOUS)

I'm Selsey. (THIS CLEARLY MEANS NOTHING) I'm a Face? One of the greatest of them on Thera Secaul?

JAMIE:

A Face? Is that like a king or something? Are you royalty?

SELSEY: (A HUMILITY SHE'D NOT HAVE HAD BEFORE THIS STARTED)

Maybe. Sort of. People look at us, look up to us. See the number on my mask? In the last year, that's a count of all the people who've looked at me. It marks my status in society.

JAMIE:

I've seen it changing.

SELSEY: (THE WRONG THING TO HAVE SAID)

Yes. It's going down. I've taken a gamble, you see. This was the first off-world expedition that a Face could go on. And all the others had had good years, with their businesses, their political influence, their starring roles... So I thought, if a Face had been to another world... They'd all look at me again. My numbers would drop while I was away, but on my return...

JAMIE:

You don't seem that happy about it.

SELSEY:

No, it will still work. It's just... I've done nothing here. People have been dying, and unregarded unknowns like you have stepped up and helped out-

JAMIE: (DRY)

Aye, you're welcome.

SELSEY:

And the best I could do was drive you around. On Thera Secaul I was asked about policy decisions! If I attended an opening, they needed security to disperse the crowds! People would faint if I spoke to them! But when you take all that away...

JAMIE: (THIS IS WASTING TIME)

Aye, it must be terrible for you. Well now maybe we can push on, see what's been happening?

SELSEY: (LOST IN HER REALISATION)

Yes... Yes, all right...

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

When we reached the camp, we had our answer. The people we'd left behind only an hour before were sprawled around again like discarded toys. Every face was covered in a mass of the Parchment creatures, flapping like a swarm of butterflies feeding on heather. Selsey began to cry at the deaths, but I'd seen someone twitch. I remembered the last attack, how we'd got there in time. Maybe, this would be the same...

And then we were spotted. The Parchment sheets came from all directions, darting up our bodies with prickly feet of folded paper. Selsey gave a cry of revulsion, swatting the things away. I tried to do as well. Then I saw one creature unfold itself back into a sheet of the Parchment, and it covered the girl's face, so tight I could see her mouth under it working in a silent cry.

Then she froze. The sheet of paper was full of words and images, streaming and flowing, so fast, and she seemed spellbound under it...

I'd been distracted, and just in time fought off one of the things,

then another! But my luck ran out, and suddenly I was blinded under a tight, smooth, pale blindfold that pulled itself onto my face. I could hardly breath. Words streamed, over and over, through my vision. (effort) I... I had to find the strength to fight... Fight back...

And the thing fell away. I wish I could say I'd bested it, but it just... (Bemused) Left me. The other paper creatures turned and hurried away. I wasn't going to waste an opportunity, so I went over to Selsey, and cleared the things off her. Like the Doctor before her, it was as if she'd woken up. She looked at me, utterly lost for a moment, as if something precious had been taken away, before saying my name and looking around in realisation.

After that, we worked quickly, looking out for each other. We freed Kelznik, the leader of this camp, and then more of the scientists. If you stopped the things coming up behind you, you could fight them off. And the more people we freed, the more they could watch out.

The Parchment things seemed to realise they were beaten, and in the blink of an eye they'd vanished into the bushes and shadows. I worried they were going to regroup, and started to carefully try and see where they'd gone.

Behind me, Kelznik had finished checking everyone had been freed in time. The whole mission was a failure, she decided.

As the sites had all broken down their little ships into base camps, they'd have to head back to the main ship, prepare for launch, then leave this planet and give instructions that no one was to return.

Selsey pointed out that the Doctor and Victoria were still in the cave. She wasn't to know we had the TARDIS, and to be honest I liked the idea of leaving, so I agreed with her that we had to get them out. Kelznik was serious then. A call had gone out across the planet. Any survivors would be heading for the main ship. We'd have to be quick, she said, as they'd not wait for any of us.

SC. 29. INT. TARDIS.

Jamie: (DISTRACTED)

"S" is for... (pause) Oh, sorry... I was... Somewhere else. (back to work, brisk, nothing-to-see-here, move-along) Anyway, "S". "S" is for sun, I can remember that.

SC. 30. INT. CAVE CHAMBER.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

We hurried back to the Doctor and Victoria. I'd half worried we'd find them at the mercy of those Parchment creatures, but instead they were busy talking and looking at the odd picture-shape things Victoria had found. I told them what had happened outside. The Doctor listened carefully, asked me about when I was attacked, then he looked to Selsey: he wanted to know how it had been for her. To my surprise, Selsey suddenly became enthusiastic. Her eyes almost glowed.

SELSEY: (AS IF DESCRIBING THE BEST CHRISTMAS EVER)

It was... Everything I'd wanted. I was the most looked-at person ever. My numbers were so high, all of the others were de-Faced, and left to be poor, normal people. There was just me. I could do whatever I wanted; give a smile or a word of wisdom, and be worshipped for it. There would be no end to [me]-

THE DOCTOR: (ALARMED)

Stop! Stop, please!

(beat)

THE DOCTOR: (MUTTER)

Hopefully stopped before any harm was done, yes... (Louder, gentler)
I'm sorry, my dear, I didn't mean to shout, but you see, you were becoming part of it.

JAMIE:

Part of what, Doctor?

VICTORIA:

The Doctor de-cyphered these symbols. They talk about the planet, about what's really wrong here.

THE DOCTOR:

Jamie, you were lucky to be able to fight the attack off. It seems you... (bashful) You've been a bit distracted when Victoria's been trying to teach you to read, haven't you?

VICTORIA AND JAMIE START TO REACT, BOTH DENIALS!

THE DOCTOR: (RAISING HIS VOICE OVER THIS, THEN SETTling DOWN)

And it saved you! Selsey here, you see, she could read the stories and they gave her everything she wanted, so that she wanted to tell everyone else. To spread the story on. Why, really, when you think about it, it's the most natural thing of all in a lifeform...

(BEAT)

JAMIE:

You mean, the Parchment's alive?

THE DOCTOR:

Not the Parchment, Jamie, no. The stories on this world. They're a sort of life-form... A story-form, if you will. It encountered life here, and gave people thrilling tales of horrific monsters, of being trapped by them and in danger. And those are powerful stories, aren't they? So naturally, they told them to each other, spreading the story, until the fear became too much, the panic broke out and each settlement destroyed itself out of fear.

VICTORIA:

So, there weren't any monsters at all-

THE DOCTOR: (SAD)

Just stories of them, that's right Victoria. It's primitive, little more than a virus, but slowly evolving. Each time it's encountered someone capable of telling a story, of passing itself on, it's adapted how it worked. Each society that collapsed - they got a little bit further, didn't they? Maybe one day life will survive here, telling the most wonderful stories ever. (Fascinated for a moment) Oh, I should like to see that!

THE DOCTOR: (recovering)

But this time, it encountered the purest medium ever, and wasn't ready for it. Parchment, you see, is created to scan the eye, to see what's being looked at, to offer the information it thinks you want. For this story-form it's the perfect way of replicating itself. And with all the Parchment's little motors and things, the story-form could make

you read it.

VICTORIA:

But the scientists here, they weren't scared were they?

THE DOCTOR:

Different stories for different cultures, Victoria. We saw it with Selsey just now: and the Parchment makes the story-form far, far more efficient. It becomes so captivating you even forget you're trapped, you forget everything, except the story. And eventually you forget to eat, to breath, so fascinated that your heart could even stop. I should imagine the first team here woke it up with their camp-fire stories, and once they had, and the Parchment computer system was infected... It was too late.

SELSEY:

That's horrible...

JAMIE:

It's just as well the scientists are all leaving then.

THE DOCTOR:

Yes, it is, I- (Realising, Horror) What?! Oh no! Why didn't you say?!

VICTORIA:

But surely that's all right, Doctor, if they all leave it behind?

SOUND FX: THE DOCTOR STARTS TO MOVE HURRIEDLY FOR THE CAVE ENTRANCE.

THE DOCTOR: (RUNNING, OVER HIS SHOULDER)

That's just it though. They won't leave it behind. They're taking it with them! Come on!

SOUND FX: HIS AND VICTORIA'S FOOTSTEPS INTO THE DISTANCE AND OUT.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

I started to run after him, then realised Selsey was just standing there, gazing up at the pictograms.

JAMIE:

Are you alright, Selsey? (Worried, reassuring her) The Doctor didn't think you'd be infected...

SELSEY: (LOST)

But we're all sort of infected, aren't we? (Realising it might not apply to him) On our planet, anyway. Wanting to believe in our stories so much, but never really questioning what they're about, or what they mean...

JAMIE: (URGENT)

It won't mean anything if we don't get after the Doctor, Selsey. Come on!

SC. 31. EXT. AMYRYNDAA SURFACE.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

And we ran after the Doctor. We caught up with him at the mouth of the cave, where he was looking down at the remains of the base camp. As the scientists had said, they'd all headed back to the main rocket. And the Parchment creatures were everywhere, wondering where their prey had gone.

Selsey had tried to contact her colleagues on the radio, but there'd been no answer. She crept away to get her vehicle started.

THE DOCTOR: (SLIGHTLY BREATHLESS, SLIGHTLY STRESSED)

The story-form is in the system now - in the expedition's primary data-hub - controlling the Parchment. But that talks to the main spaceship. If they return that to their homeworld, well... It would be an extinction event!

VICTORIA:

What can we do?

JAMIE:

Can we no' stop the rocket taking off?

THE DOCTOR:

Yes, Jamie, that's a thought. Delay the launch, anyway, until we can reset the data-hub. That's probably all we'd need to do...

VICTORIA:

"All", Doctor? They've got a head start. What if they take off before we get there?

SOUND FX: SELSEY'S VEHICLE, WHICH HAS STARTED UP AND APPROACHED THROUGH THE EARLIER LINES, DRAWS TO A HALT RIGHT NEXT TO THEM.

THE DOCTOR:

Then it's a good job we've got a lift. Good work Selsey! Come on! Oh! Oh my word! The Parchment's realised we're here!

SOUND FX: DISTANT, BUT GETTING EVER CLOSER, PAPER CREATURES SCUTTILING.

JAMIE:

Victoria, you first. That's it. Now Doctor, you next.

THE DOCTOR:

No, you next Jamie.

GRUNTS AS THEY BOTH TRY AND ENTER AT THE SAME TIME.

JAMIE: (WRY)

Aye, or we could just try and the same time.

THEY GO INSIDE, THE DOOR SLAMS, AND JUST AS THE SCUTTILING IS AT ITS LOUDEST, THE VEHICLE HEADS OFF.

SC. 32. INT. VEHICLE.

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

And we drove as fast as we could, hoping we weren't already too late. Selsey told the Doctor that the engines on the main ship had proximity detectors. If she could get her vehicle close enough, they would automatically shut down. The Doctor smiled at what he said was the first bit of good news all day.

But we had to get there first. Twice we nearly crashed, half bouncing into the air when the ground suddenly dropped away for a second. I wondered if those Parchment creatures were behind us. How fast could they move? Could they work out what was planned?

And eventually, after what felt like an age, Selsey slowed down. Ahead was a fat sphere of a hut covered in spindly aerials - what the Doctor identified as this data-hub thing. He and I got out. Victoria would be safer in the vehicle, and we said we'd see her in a minute. Selsey seemed to have something on her mind, but then the vehicle drove off and so we hurried inside.

SC. 33. INT. DATA-HUB STATION.

SOUND FX: THE SOFT HUM OF ELECTRONICS AND AIR-CONDITIONING TO KEEP IT COOL. A 1960S MACHINE ROOM.

SOUND FX: FOOTSTEPS AS JAMIE AND THE DOCTOR HURRY INSIDE.

JAMIE:

Och, this is all beyond me. It looks worse than the TARDIS in here!

THE DOCTOR: (MATTER-OF-FACT, POINTING THEM OUT)

Oh, it's all quite simple really. The actual data-hub is there, that's all extended storage, and those bits there are the communications links.

JAMIE: (SOUR)

Aye, simple.

THE DOCTOR:

Yes, yes, Jamie. Computers, memory units, data processors, it's all here. Highly advanced, I grant you. But perhaps just this once you can help me with it.

JAMIE: (REALISING)

Ahhhhhh. Which bit to you want me to smash?

THE DOCTOR: (CHUCKLE)

Just go as the mood takes you.

SOUND FX: PICKING A HEAVY SPANNER OFF A SURFACE.

JAMIE:

Aye, this'll be easy. This spanner thing should do it.

SOUND FX: AND THEN SUDDENLY THE PARCHMENT IS HEARD, UNFOLDING OUT OF CRACKS AND SHADOWS, SCUTTling FORWARD EN MASSE.

JAMIE:

It was waiting for us!

THE DOCTOR: (PANICKED)

Oh! Oh my giddy aunt! Jamie! Watch out! They'll go for the eyes!

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

The Parchment things swarmed towards us, their paper surfaces running with words, flicking themselves up through the air at us, scuttling over our clothes and up our bodies. They seemed to know they could still get the Doctor and focused on him. It gave me just one chance.

SOUND FX: THE PARCHMENT CREATURES SCUTTling, UNDER JAMIE'S EFFORTS, HITTING A MACHINE ONCE, TWICE, AND - ON THE THIRD TIME - IT BREAKING. A SMALL ELECTRICAL EXPLOSION.

SOUND FX: THE PARCHMENT STOPS INSTANTLY, SHEETS OF CRUMPLED PAPER FALLING TO THE FLOOR. JAMIE AND THE DOCTOR GET THEIR BREATH BACK.

THE DOCTOR:

Well done, Jamie. You've got an aptitude for the technical after all!

JAMIE: (NARRATING)

It was over. As I got my breath back, I glanced outside, over to the distant rocket-

-Just in time to see Victoria and Selsey's vehicle bang into the engines... It couldn't seem to stop. It span away, caught the edge of a slope, and rolled over. And as the Doctor and I ran in horror towards it, there was the boom of an explosion, and then a rolling, angry ball of flame rising into the sky.

SC. 34. INT. TARDIS BACKGROUND.

JAMIE: (almost shy, slightly out of his depth)

"V" is for... is for Victoria.

LONG PAUSE, BEFORE:

SC. 35. INT. PRESENT DAY. VICTORIA'S HOME.

VICTORIA: (NARRATING)

Selsey once said to me that the story of her life, such as it was, was a story that had no character in it. I wondered a lot about that when they searched the wreckage of the vehicle, and found nothing but a blackened mask. Nobody knew who she was underneath and I think she was taking the chance to be a new character in a new story. I hope it was a good one.

She'd thrown me out of the vehicle at the last minute, and - of course - scared the Doctor and Jamie terribly. There always seemed to be a lot of scares in those days. But when I think about it all now, I think the thing that scared me the most was myself. Travelling with the Doctor meant I was like the unmasked Selsey; I could be anyone, do anything: but I was a girl who had been raised to think in certain ways, and aim for very specific roles. All those potential changes! Oh, I wasn't ready. I've changed a lot since then, and I think I'd be ready now. (regret) But, unfortunately, we don't all have a time machine.

I look again at the stranger's gift there on my shelf, a tiny thing like one of Papa's snuffboxes. Heavens only knows what it's made of, but the material feels smooth, almost warm, almost- (Surprise) Oh!

VICTORIA:

A small lid opens up in it, and inside is a many-folded piece of paper. The sound when I unfold it makes me shudder even now.

SOUND FX: UNFOLDING OF A DENSELY FOLDED PAGE, UNCOMFORTABLY LIKE THE FX OF SOME OF THE ORIGAMI SHAPES FROM EARLIER.

JAMIE: (Reading)

"Dear Victoria. We only realised you still had a sheet of the Parchment long after we left Amyryndaa, but it has been preying on the Doctor's mind. He says that if Earth evolved wireless communication - whatever that is - then what we saw might happen all over again, perhaps even worse. We've been trying to find you, but you know what the TARDIS is like."

"I had hoped to see you again, but I'm beginning to suspect this will never happen. The Doctor says he'll find you one day, so I've given him this letter for the day he does. I think you and I both know that could be some considerable time. He's a great man, but his skills as a messenger leave a lot to be desired. Still, he did teach me to read and write in the end. This is the very first time I've written something without his help. What I most [wanted to say is this]

VICTORIA:

...And as I read on through the pages, it occurs to me that sometimes paper can still be immensely powerful. Even when there's no alien thing controlling it, when there's no monsters, no threat...

But when there are just words. Then it can be the most powerful thing of all.

MUSIC: (DOCTOR WHO CLOSING TITLES)

(end of text)